

Negro Players Display Talent At the Garden

By Charles Darnton.

A CURIOUSLY interesting phase of dramatic endeavor was revealed at the Garden Theatre last night when Mrs. Hagood exploited her so-called colored players in three plays by Ridgeley Torrence, a white poet, who has chosen a black background for his work.

This attempt to preserve in dramatic form a part of American life should be considered as important in its aspiration as the effort of Yeats, Lady Gregory and Synge to reproduce Irish peasant life. It has something in common, too, with the Welsh play "Change" and Hauptmann's "The Weavers."

Mr. Torrence has a real understanding of character, together with a poetic sense that lifts the lowly to surprising heights of imagination. "The Rider of Dreams" is quite as lifelike in its way as some of Lady Gregory's one-act plays. The hard-working, plow wife who has saved \$500 in the hope of buying a home, only to find that her wool-gathering husband has drawn all her money and then been robbed by a scoundrel "white man," is a character to win the sympathy of any audience. It is the tale, dreaming husband, however, who is of first importance. With a guitar in his possession he is happy until he finds his money has been taken from him. When this is restored he merely asks that he be permitted to dream his dreams and make his own music. The old doctor who saves the little household from disaster was played effectively by Alexander Rogers. As the shiftless husband Opal Cooper acted naturally and sang bits of negro songs as only a darky can sing them. Blanche Teas made the wife a simple creature, and little Joseph Burr brought a keen appetite for "mush" to the part of Booker Sparrow.

Bach's Passion By St. Matthew Sung by Oratorio

By Sylvester Rawling.

LOUIS KOENIGMEYER and the Oratorio Society at Carnegie Hall last night presented Bach's "The Passion According to St. Matthew." It has not been sung by the society since 1910, when Dr. Frank Damosch was conductor. Some of the learned and critical devotees of Bach were dissatisfied, declaring, with more or less vehemence, what they believed to be Mr. Koennigmeier's failure to grasp the spirit of Bach's work and pointing out many faults in interpretation. Well, maybe; but for myself, the performance was one of beauty and of excellence; and the large audience, by its unequivocal expression of pleasure, evidently agreed with me.

Mr. Koennigmeier has retranslated the work, but, at a superficial glance, he has made no vital changes in the text. What he seems to have done is attempt to facilitate the rhythm. He has made some transpositions in the numbers; but, save for that, without close comparison of the two books, it would be difficult to distinguish Mr. Koennigmeier's version from the old one that was sung at St. Bartholomew's Church on Tuesday night. The weakness of the performance, from my point of view, was also its strength. Of Mr. Koennigmeier's 200 singers too many were women. The total balance was upset. Either Mr. Koennigmeier must get more tenors and basses, or cut down the sopranos and altos. But I do not recall when the women sang with such beauty

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MARY NASH IN "THE MAN WHO CAME BACK" AT THE PLAYHOUSE

and finish. That was a consolation worth while. Of the individual singers almost nothing can be said save in praise. Lambert Murphy, the tenor, as the Narrator, delivered the recitations in lovely voice and with fine diction. Impassioned, both as to voice and to manner, was the utterance of the words of Christ by Reinald Werrenrath, the baritone. Frank Coxton, the bass, sang the phrases of Judas and of the High Priest convincingly. It was a pleasure to hear Corina Rider-Kelsey, soprano, again. She is become too much of a stranger to us. Then there was Henriette Wakefield, contralto, like Mr. Murphy, formerly of the Metropolitan Opera Company, who sang well. Her enunciation was not as clear as that of the other principals, who showed how easily English may be sung so as to be understood.

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The solo violinist, Charles H. Baker, was at the piano and David McK. Williams was at the organ.

MILLS INCOME TAX BILL OPPOSED BY OFFICIALS

Fear It Will Conflict with Federal Measure—Corporation Agents Score It.

(Special From a Staff Correspondent of The Evening World.) ALBANY, April 6.—Decided opposition developed to-day among tax officials of the State to the Mills Income Tax Law, imposing a tax upon the earning of mercantile and manufacturing corporations. The official opposition is based upon the idea that a State tax will conflict with the Federal Income Tax system, which will probably have to be extended in view of the war with Germany.

The provision of the new measure which gives the State Tax Commission the right to examine the books and records of the corporations, was denounced by attorneys and agents of the latter before the legislative Tax Commission as "paternalistic and inquisitorial."

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